

We claim:

1. A method, comprising:
offering an item for sale on a website;
allowing a user to browse the website via a client computer;
generating a shopping cart;
allowing the user to place the item in the shopping cart; and
storing information about the item and the user in a single memory location in response to the browsing session being interrupted.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
allowing the user to resume the interrupted browsing session;
identifying the user;
retrieving the information about the item from the single memory location in response to identifying the user; and
restoring the shopping cart from the retrieved information.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein identifying the user comprises retrieving a cookie from the client computer.
4. The method of claim 2 wherein identifying the user comprises identifying the user from information the user enters via the client computer.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein restoring the shopping cart comprises displaying information associated with the item and information associated with the user.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein storing information about the user comprises storing on the client computer a cookie operable to identify the client computer.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein storing information about the user comprises storing a cookie on the client computer in response to the user placing the item in the shopping cart, the cookie operable to identify the client computer.
8. The method of claim 1, further comprising deleting the information about the item and the user after a predetermined time period.
9. A server, comprising:
 - a memory;
 - a processor coupled to the memory and operable to execute a component of a software application, and, in response to the component, to,
 - generate a website that offers an item for sale,
 - allow a user to browse the website via a client computer,
 - generate a shopping cart,
 - allow the user to select the item for purchase by placing the item in the shopping cart, and
 - store in the memory information about the item and the user in response to the browsing session being interrupted.

10. The server of claim 9 where in response to the software component, the processor is further operable to store a cookie on the client computer during the browsing session, the cookie including the information about the user.

11. The server of claim 9 where in response to the software component, the processor is further operable to store a cookie on the client computer in response to the user placing the item into the shopping cart, the cookie including the information about the user.

12. The server of claim 9 wherein the software component comprises a plug-in software component.

13. The server of claim 9 wherein the information about the user comprises a name of the user.

14. The server of claim 9 wherein the information about the user comprises information about the client computer.

15. The server of claim 9 wherein the information about the item comprises a description of the item.

16. The server of claim 9 wherein the information about the item comprises an inventory level of the item.

17. The server of claim 9 wherein the information about the item comprises a price of the item.

18. A method, comprising:

allowing a user to browse a website via a client computer;
determining whether the user has a shopping cart from a previous browser session;
retrieving shopping-cart information from a single memory location if the user has a shopping cart from a previous browser session; and
regenerating the shopping cart from the retrieved shopping-cart information.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising updating the regenerated shopping cart.

20. The method of claim 18 wherein regenerating the shopping cart comprises including an item that the user placed in the shopping cart during the previous browser session.

21. The method of claim 18 wherein determining whether the user has a shopping cart from a previous browser session comprises determining if there is a stored shopping cart associated with the client computer.

22. The method of claim 18 wherein determining whether the user has a shopping cart from a previous browser session comprises determining if there is a stored shopping cart associated with the user.

23. A server, comprising:

a memory;

a processor coupled to the memory and operable to execute a component of a software application, and, in response to the component, to,

allow a user to browse a website via a client computer,

determine whether the user has a shopping cart from a previous browser session,

retrieve shopping-cart information from the memory if the user has a shopping cart from a previous browser session, and

regenerate the shopping cart from the retrieved shopping-cart information.

24. A system, comprising:

a client computer;

a server operable to be coupled to the client computer and including,

a memory,

a processor coupled to the memory and operable to execute a component of a software application, and, in response to the component, to,

generate a website that offers an item for sale,

allow a user to establish a first browsing session on the website via the client computer,

generate a shopping cart,

allow the user to select the item for purchase by placing the item in the shopping cart,

store in the memory information about the item and the user in response to the first browsing session being interrupted,
allow the user to establish a second browsing session on the website,
determine during the second browsing session that the user has a shopping cart from the first browsing session, and
regenerate the shopping cart from the information about the item stored in the memory.

25. The system of claim 24 wherein the processor is operable to determine that the user has a shopping cart from the first browsing session by comparing information received about the user during the second browsing session with the information about the user stored in the memory in response to the first browsing session being interrupted.

26. The system of claim 24 wherein:

the information stored about the user includes information about the client computer; and

the processor is operable to determine that the user has a shopping cart from the first browsing session by comparing information received about the client computer during the second browsing session with the information about the client computer stored in the memory in response to the first browsing session being interrupted.

27. A data carrier having computer-executable instructions operable to:
offer an item for sale on a downloadable webpage;

allow a user to browse the webpage via a client computer;
generate a shopping cart for display on the client computer;
allow the user to place the item in the shopping cart; and
store information about the item and the user in a single memory location in
response to the browsing session being interrupted.

28. The data carrier of claim 27 comprising one or more TCP/IP packets.

29. The data carrier of claim 27 comprising an object-oriented process.

30. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions operable
to:

offer an item for sale on a downloadable webpage;
allow a user to browse the webpage via a client computer;
generate a shopping cart for display on the client computer;
allow the user to place the item in the shopping cart; and
store information about the item and the user in a single memory location in
response to the browsing session being interrupted.